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## SHORTENING THE YEARS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLING.

WHEN a measured educational task is allotted to any school, or to any class of institutions, it is a frequent occurrence that the teacher finds the allotted time to be rather short. The common-school teachers, as a rule, when questioned as to whether or not, in any given year of a course of instruction, they have more time than they can profitably employ, answer in the negative. If the high schools that receive their students from the common schools were asked whether the students are so well prepared that a shortening of the time of preparation is feasible, they would probably dwell on the shortcomings of the preparation as it is. The same is true in regard to the efficiency of the high-school preparation when judged from the college standpoint. There seems to be a contradiction between the cry for a more thorough common-school preparation and the demand involved in various plans which have been the subject of recent discussions for a shortening of the time of the common school. It is only when we look upon the several steps of a complete scholastic education that the need of reconstruction or reformation of the course becomes evident. The common school, the high school, the college, and the university are the links of a long educational chain. Looking upon the years of life required to pass through these institutions, and to finish the complete course of training which they offer, there seems to be some danger that education, instead of being purely a preparation for life, will encroach upon the time and functions of life itself. A peculiarly inappropriate and sinister significance is given to the abused watchword "Education is Life," by extending schooling to an age which leaves but a little span of time to life itself. Where a professional education is to follow the preparatory common-school, high-school and college education, the years of early manhood are taken up, not with life-work, but with school work. Participation in the real life and in the serious duties of

a vocation are postponed. The years of dependence are lengthened, and the moment deferred when the youth shall stand self-reliant in the place which he has found for himself in the great army that is doing the world's work. The experiences of actual life are so essential for the training of manhood that their omission and the substitution therefor of scholastic training is a question which should be carefully considered. Activity in the world, co-operation and competition with other workers, contain educational influences as potent and essential as the training given by high schools. The boy of sixteen who enters some vocation in shop or counting-room, after a period of elementary schooling, becomes within the eight years following a man and a self-poised social unit through the educational forces of life brought to bear upon him. The other, more fortunate boy, who goes to college and enjoys the advantage of fuller education continues necessarily a relation of dependence. He relies on others for support. The feeling of responsibility, and the whole seriousness in the conduct of life which every vocation exacts from its votaries, are a training which the college boy does not receive as early as his less favored brother. Such training is deferred in his case until his education is completed, whose fuller scope is designed to fit him for more responsible duties when he enters life. It is evidently a matter of great public interest to see that the college-bred youth should enter upon his professional and more responsible career at a time of life that is not inordinately late; that the period of tutelage is not unduly prolonged, and that he shall assume the responsibilities of manhood when he has attained the age of manhood. When the Goths, in the later history of the Roman empire, had overrun Italy, and taken a permanent possession, they established civic institutions and promoted schools. But they would not let their own sons attend them, because they feared that the boy who had trembled under the rod of the schoolmaster, would become unfitted for his career as a warrior. While this, of course, is a barbarian's view, there is nevertheless an element of truth in the idea that the prolongation of school life beyond the proper limit is a matter which must be judged, not merely in regard to the edu-

cation which the youth receives, but also in regard to the education of which he is deprived.

College time has encroached very gradually, but very steadily, on lifetime. Longfellow graduated from Bowdoin at eighteen, and was professor of modern languages at twenty-two; Webster graduated from Dartmouth at nineteen; Bancroft from Harvard at seventeen; Emerson graduated from Harvard at eighteen. These illustrations give evidence of the change brought about in the course of years through the evolution of colleges and universities, and the increased demands which they make upon the students. It is easy to see the necessity for a readjustment of the complete educational career so that it may be possible for the student to finish his college and professional education soon enough to enter some vocation in early manhood. A further reason for the early completion of the college course is found in the greater demands made upon the professional education which follows the college and the amount of time that is necessary for specializing in any direction.

The readjustment sought by the plan which this association has proposed for discussion consists in relegating to the high school two years of college study, on the one hand, and the addition to it of the last two years of the common-school curriculum, on the other. To the present four-years' course in the high school two years' college work is to be added from above, and two years' common-school course from below, representing, according to the present standard, eight years' work, for which it is planned to allow six years' time. The means of making this feasible, consists, it is suggested, in the "condensation" of the present program. The idea of condensation is applied in the proposed plan not only to the high school, but also to the elementary schools. They are to have a six-years' course instead of an eight-years' course, and the work is to be reduced by a "condensation" of the existing programs.

I am afraid that the term "condensation" may lead at the very outset to some misapprehension in regard to how such a change, if made at all, can be brought about. Condensation would seem to mean that the same quantity of subject-matter of

instruction should be packed more closely together in regard to time. From my own point of view, if there is any change in the duration of the course to be made, it cannot be made by condensation exclusively, but must largely be brought about by selection and omission. If the idea connected with the proposed plan is that all the matter that has been taught in an eight-years' course can be taught in a six-years' course, by packing it closer in regard to time, or by condensation, the result will be an overburdening of the child by a high-pressure system on one hand, and "cramming" on the other. While there might be a so-called gain in time, there would be an educational loss by which no class of institutions would profit.

The view underlying the whole plan of readjustment is certainly in one respect commendable, and involves a principle which all thoughtful educators believe, namely, that all educational interests are allied, and educational plans for any school should be viewed from the standpoint of education as a totality. A system of common schools must bear in mind the high school and the college, and *vice versa*. In the education bill that is at present agitating Great Britain, a fine phrase occurs which speaks of the "correlation of all the forms of education." The solidarity of educational interests is one of the cornerstones of the modern schoolman's creed. The university, which has done so much to vivify, lift, and strengthen both high-school and elementary-school education, and which is justly stepping into a position of leadership in all educational matters, has the same obligation to regard the welfare of elementary or high schools as the elementary school and the high school have in turn to consider in their teaching, and programs, and appointments, the cause of higher education. Education as a totality should be borne in mind whenever a change in plans or administrative features of any of the forms of education is under discussion.

There is, however, a still wider totality than that formed by all the educational institutions in their entirety. School and life form a greater unit, and any adjustment on the basis of joint school interests alone would be incomplete without taking into consideration the interests of life and the life-relations of school.

The elementary school is not only connected through the high school with the college, but more directly with life itself. The number of pupils that prepare for a higher course of training in the common school is small compared with the masses that depend on it for their entire education. For the nation at large the common school is the one educational unit that is of transcendent importance. No readjustment of the elementary curriculum should be made solely for one-sided and minor reasons of high-school and college requirements. All plans for reform, in order to be feasible, must show that they are an advantage to the elementary school, considered by itself and in its direct relation to life. In other words, no change in the curriculum should be made for the benefit of the college, if it does not, at the same time, benefit the common school itself.

The great, constant, and beneficent influence which colleges and universities have had on the development of our institutions, political, social, and economic, is hardly appreciated to its full extent. Not a law is passed in Congress or legislature that is not in a measure the outflow of the training which leading minds have received directly or indirectly through higher education. Not a mill is built in the centers of industry, not a wheel turns in factory or shop, except in accord with the design and plan of some college-trained brain. From the columns of the daily paper, which molds and leads opinion, from the pages of every book that instructs or entertains the American home, the voice of the college speaks through one of its disciples. And yet, no matter how fully we appreciate the importance of college life, no matter how strong our conviction that the public high-school would fail in one of its important aims if it did not direct constantly the aspiration of the pupil toward college, we must concede that the importance of the common school for the nation is infinitely greater than that of the college, both on account of the immense number who attend the common school and owe to it their whole education, and on account of the wider range of the social classes with which it is in touch through its local distribution throughout every part of our country. Where Americans live the common school lives. In the common inter-

est taken in it by the whole people, in the importance of its work for the maintenance of national institutions, the common school and its interest ranks first and above all others. This applies most emphatically to the elementary school and also in a great measure to the high school. Where a readjustment of the totality of educational conditions becomes a necessity, the one principle which I believe every educator should maintain is that the interests of the common school must not suffer. The common school represents the larger national value.

There are two questions involved in the plan under discussion. The one is the shortening of the district-school course by condensation. In addition to this abbreviation, the plan contemplates the transfer of two years of the district-school curriculum to the high school.

The transfer of district-school studies to the high school is attended by certain administrative difficulties. It is a question not so much of principle as of expediency and of ways and means. For the school systems of large cities, questions of finance are very pressing and vital ones. High-school instruction is much more costly than the elementary-school work. I do not understand that it is claimed that the work of the higher grades of the district school is not well done, and that the transfer of the work to the high school should be made for that reason. The transfer of two grades of the district schools to the high schools would add a large per capita cost to the expense of education, without any apparent gain in educational results.

*The localization of attendance.*—The transfer of children after a six-years' common-school course to some high school located at a distance from the school which they have been attending is objectionable for other practical reasons. What might be called "localization of school attendance" seems to be a universal law, although it has been discussed chiefly in connection with college enrolment. Great colleges of national reputation draw their students, to an astonishing extent, from the immediate neighborhood of the place in which they are located. It has been stated, if I mistake not, by the esteemed chairman of this meeting, that Harvard, Yale, and Princeton draw about 90 per

cent. of their students from a radius of about a hundred and fifty miles. Statistics of high-school attendance would probably show a similar principle. The proximity of the school is an inducement to attendance. Whenever children have finished the district-school course a considerable number leave altogether, on account of the greater distance which they would have to travel if they continued their training in the high school.

If the elementary course were divided by delegating two years of it to the high school, the effect would be something entirely different from the proposed transfer of some studies. It would mean in reality that the common-school course is made shorter. To put two years of the district-school course into the high school, even in an abridged or condensed form, would not be merely a change of location, but would probably result in an absolute shortening of the course. A large number of children would discontinue their schooling altogether after having finished the short elementary course

*An elementary course of seven years.*—While there are good reasons against a transfer of the two highest grades of the elementary-school course to the high schools, and against its incidental reduction to six years, the shortening of the time to seven years deserves more favorable consideration. Such a course would cover the ages from six to thirteen, and would represent a fairly well-defined period in the child's physical and mental life. Its termination would correspond approximately with the time of transition from childhood to youth, with all the changes in the physiological organization that this implies. Mentally it usually marks a greater prevalence of seriousness, interest in life-affairs, an awakening and sense of responsibility, and stronger evidence of power for good or evil. The high school would profit by a shortening of the elementary course, because very often the reason why a parent does not send his boy or girl to the high school is that he considers him too old to begin a course of training which requires four years to finish.

*Waste in elementary education.*—A reduction of the time of the elementary course to seven years should be brought about, not by condensation and a high-pressure system of more work in



less time, but by a selection of the essentials in the prevailing studies, the weeding out of superfluities, and the stoppage of waste. On this basis a seven-years' course could be elaborated which would be perfectly satisfactory for the average child. There should be a flexible system of grading and promotion in connection with such a course which would enable the talented child to complete the elementary work in less than seven years, and make it equally feasible for the slow child to spend a longer time.

There is a certain waste in common-school education which may be remedied by a stricter enforcement of the ordinary principles of common-sense and pedagogical experience. In an investigation which I conducted several years ago it was found that about a year's time was being lost somewhere in the elementary course of our city schools. It was fully expected that this retardation could be located in the higher grades, where the difficulties of the work increase, where the study of geography and history introduces new elements, and arithmetic becomes more complicated. Contrary to expectation, the final result of the inquiry showed that the loss took place in the lower grades, from the first to the fifth. A further surprising result of the investigation was that there appeared no retardation, or loss of time in the higher grades, but rather an acceleration; in many instances the work of two years was done in a year or a year and a half.

*Causes of retardation in studies.*—The retardation in the lower grades is due to quite a number of more or less obvious causes. One of them is that the principle of thoroughness in elementary work is at times carried too far. Grade teachers, principals, and supervisory officers should remember that each grade is followed by some other grade that goes over much of the same work once more, and fixes and deepens the impressions made by preceding instruction. There is at times in the minds of teachers an ideal of absolute perfection which stops the child's progress by keeping him drilling on topics which he knows sufficiently well to take the next step. Many things which the child learns will become more and more fixed in his mind as he passes on

through higher work of the same kind. Each grade must of necessity leave some work for the next—"absolute perfection is not the learner's, but the master's attainment." That there are data and principles in the work of each grade which must be absolutely learned is obviously true; but it is also true that there are others which, when fairly well known, suggest progress and promotion. Discrimination and good sense on the part of the teacher are necessary to secure the proper application of the principle of thoroughness in elementary work.

Competent supervision of the work of the teachers, and inspiring leadership of principals and superintendents, are conditions of good educational results. Nevertheless in some good school systems the very excellence and force of the supervisory staff have resulted in a loss of time. Supervision is likely to have this result if it looks too exclusively after results and not sufficiently after *methods* of teaching; after the acquisition of data through memory rather than the utilizing of the data for the training of judgment and thought. The teacher, for instance, who knows that her work and standing are likely to be judged by the supervisory officer in accordance with the lightning speed and "glibness" with which the class recites the tables in arithmetic assigned to the grade, will keep the class drilling on tables and numbers not only until it knows them, but until it has known them well for quite a while. Usually proficiency is a cause for promotion; in some cases it is a reason why the class is *not* promoted. The teacher is unwilling to send the bright class to the next room until the impending quarterly visit of the supervisor has taken place and the attainments of the pupils have been duly credited to the skill of the teacher. Until that moment they are kept marking time around the goal of "thoroughness." The child's best interests are sacrificed to distorted notions of perfection when a class which has attained reasonable proficiency is not allowed to take the next step in advance. Half-baked knowledge, like half-baked bread, may be indigestible, but it is also true that knowledge overdone becomes nauseating and destroys mental appetite.

In elementary instruction, as in higher work, the proper dis-

crimination as to the relative values of the subjects of instruction will prevent waste. Data are necessary, but the principles under which they can be subsumed, and which appeal to judgment and intelligence, should be first in importance in the everyday work of teaching, and should not be forgotten in the more or less mechanical exercise of memory. As in the proper conduct of an examination in arithmetic, for instance, the child should receive credit for the correct process, even if the results should happen to be wrong by an error in ciphering, so in all instruction, progress and promotion should have for their test the intelligent grouping and handling of facts and an insight into principles, and should not be made to depend exclusively on the number of the data that have been lodged in the memory and are capable of reproduction in examination. Written examinations have their proper place in instruction. They guard against diffuseness and against "too much method with too little matter." But as an exclusive test for promotion they are a curse; they force the teacher's activity into the narrow channels of acquisition through memory work, and put obstacles in the way of the proper cultivation of judgment and skill. The elementary school prepares the child most efficiently for high-school work, or for life, by laying stress more on skill and thought than on the quantity of the data of knowledge.

The adjustment of elementary instruction to a course of seven years should not be one of condensation, which crowds more data into an already short time, but rather one of omission—the omission of many pages, or even of a whole book, in geography; the omission of various topics in arithmetic; the omission of dates and meaningless or irrelevant details in history; and the omission of much of the merely technical part of grammar.

There should, on the other hand, be no curtailment of time in regard to the essentials such as in the development of skill and of the training of thoughtful habits of study. It would be a one-sided view of education to look upon it solely as the result of the efforts of teacher and child, which can be hastened at will. Education is largely a matter of growth which requires time and makes haste pernicious.

The results of common-school training should be expressed rather in terms of power, than in terms of pages. The child when leaving the elementary school, after a seven-years' course, should be able to read English easily and intelligently and to discriminate in the use of words he should be able to express in writing his thoughts on everyday subjects within the limits of his own experience. His handwriting should be clear and legible. He should possess a fair degree of skill in the common processes of arithmetic and readiness to reason out solutions of problems. He should have a clear understanding of the general ideas of geography, such as the position and movements of the earth, and the physical causes of terrestrial life; he should also have an elementary knowledge of topical geography, *i. e.*, the location of cities, rivers, mountains, etc. He should know the drift of American history, and have a thoughtful knowledge of the contents of the constitution of the United States. A certain amount of manual training, which includes drawing, may form part of this course.

There is waste in the common schools, not only in regard to the number of data required to be studied, but also, to some extent, in the methods of teaching. I do not advocate the European plan of purely oral instruction in the elementary schools. Books are a necessity in modern life, and elementary education had better recognize this fact and teach their use. Books offer to the child and to the adult opportunities of extending and continuing his education, and the library is to the whole community a source of refined pleasure as well as of knowledge. To initiate the child to a knowledge of books and, what is more important, to give him the ability to use them for purposes of reading, and purpose of study, to teach him to love and enjoy books, should be indispensable parts of modern elementary education, and I believe the American common school to be superior to its European sisters in regard to the more extensive use of books as means of instruction. The ability to extract information and pleasure from the printed page is not only good preparation for life, but good preparation for high school and college. While thus emphatically indorsing the use of

text-books in the elementary schools, their misuse has been, and is, a drawback in education and implies a waste of time. The proper use of the book in the elementary school requires that the teacher and class should read and study the text-book together. The preparation for each lesson should require that teacher and class attack it jointly, with the book open before them. The topic is illustrated and discussed with constant reference to the presentation of the matter in this book. Class and teacher sift the important from the unimportant, group dependent data under general ideas, and distinguish between principle and application. This is an excellent introduction to the *thoughtful* seizing of the contents of a lesson as distinguished from the acquisition of the data of a text-book where lessons are assigned to be memorized. What Professor Hinsdale called the study recitation should be the common mode of teaching many of the subjects in the elementary schools. The text-book then fills its proper place and enables the child to review and to master in detail and more thoroughly, the lesson with which he has become acquainted by joint study with the teacher. It enables the slow child to keep step with the brighter child who does not need such additional application. It brings in an element of rational balance by allowing the weaker and less gifted child to put more time into the work as a partial equivalent for the greater talent of the other. The old way of assigning lessons by pages in the text-book, and throwing the child entirely on his own resources, is a more frequent cause of waste in common-school education than is usually supposed.

*Possibility of reduction.*—With a proper selection of subject-matter, and perhaps with the substitution of one book in geography for the customary two; with a reduction of the number of text-books in arithmetic; with stress laid on the practical and intelligent acquisition of good English (deferring some of the formal grammar to the time when a foreign language is studied in the high school); and with a change in the method of conducting recitations; a course of study in the elementary school based on seven years instead of eight is feasible. A seven-years' elementary course will probably increase the high-school attend-

ance. The experience of Kansas City and other places in regard to this matter seems convincing. I believe that Superintendent Greenwood asserts that there is no city in the United States where the high-school attendance, in proportion to the number of children enrolled, is as large as in Kansas City, which has a seven-years' elementary course and an enrolment of over 3,700 high school students, with a total school enrolment of 29,000.

An elementary course of seven years would steer clear of the dangers which a reduction to six years would carry with it. It would not stint the common school for the sake of the high school or college. It would not lead to a high-pressure system in elementary instruction, which must be avoided at all hazards. While a seven-years' course would probably enable the average child to go to the high school at an earlier age than he does at present, there should be provided a way for the talented boy or girl to shorten even this time. This is made possible by the system of individual promotions, which prevails in many of the western schools, where the classes are separated by but small intervals of time. To illustrate: in many rooms there are two classes of children with an interval of from one to two quarters' work between them. This makes it feasible for the teacher, when she sees a very talented child in her second class, who is capable of doing the work of a higher grade, to put him with the first class, with a quarter's gain in time for the child. Moreover, it should be made possible for a whole class to finish the work allotted in a course of study in less time than the prescribed half-year or years. Every school should have provision for promoting capable children from class to class, or from room to room, whenever reasonable proficiency has been obtained in the work allotted to the grade. In this system of flexible promotions, the possession of a sufficient knowledge of the data of the work is requisite, but there is always need of laying at least equal stress on the ability to do work, on the possession of skill, on the evidence of good judgment, and on the power to reason. Such individual promotions can rarely be decided by written examinations, but must be made on the basis of the teacher's knowledge of the power of the child. There should be in every

school a certain lively flow of progress, both in regard to new knowledge presented, and in regard to the child's advancement from grade to grade. Such a system will rather enhance than impair the efficiency of the elementary schools, and enable the child to enter the high school and the college a year earlier than he does now.

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#### DISCUSSION.

PROFESSOR JOHN DEWEY: I find myself in such accord with the proposition that I shall not take your time in making any arguments against it. The reasons for it have been so fully presented that I do not see my way to add anything in that line. So I shall confine my remarks to raising two questions which come to the minds of all of us, and making some statements suggested by these questions.

1. Will the reduction of the elementary period to six years tend to restrict the movement now making to enrich the curriculum; by which I understand the movement to introduce more worthy objects of study and important modes of activity? Will it promote a reaction to the more formal and mechanical course which we are just now at great cost escaping?

2. Will the beginning of more specialized and professional work at the very outset of the university period tend to exclude important facts of general culture from the education of those going into professions?

I put the question in this way because, if these results were to follow, I suppose we would all condemn the propositions before us; because they suggest real dangers, and yet suggest their own adequate answer. If the proposition were carried out in a purely mechanical way—simply lopping of a year here and transferring it bodily from this year to that—then the scheme would undoubtedly have these undesirable results. But this quantitative and external re-arrangement is only, I take it, for the purpose of securing administrative conditions of an internal and qualitative readjustment. The real value of the scheme is in the opportunity it affords and the demand it makes for a more efficient division of labor between the elementary, secondary, and collegiate members of the educational organism.

While there is altogether too much separation between the grades and the high school and the high school and the college, there is not enough distinction. The separation is in the outward forms; too

many barriers; too many encouragements to dropping out at the various transitions; too many discouragers from continuity. But at the same time there is too little recognition, practical and theoretical, of the definite kind of work most profitably to be undertaken by each.

The elementary school has too long a period to be occupied advantageously with its own particular task; it is induced and even compelled to assume aims outside of its own proper function, to the confusion of its own work, and to the detriment of the service it might render other parts of the system. The high school, on the contrary, has too little time to perform its own work, and consequently it is cramped and irritated and hurried in its operations.

1. *The elementary period.* — It would seem as if the length of time allowed would enable the elementary school to accomplish its own work and do something besides. But the length of time allotted represents a misconception of the aim of this period, and so tends to a misdirection of energy. The aim, as ordinarily considered, is to cover a certain amount of ground in studies and thus acquire a certain amount of knowledge. Since this represents all the information the mass of future citizens will get in any scholastic way, there has been a constant tendency to increase the term of time so as to cover more ground.

When I say that the acquiring of knowledge is not the proper end of elementary education, and to make that the aim is to encroach upon secondary instruction, I do not mean that children at present are getting too much knowledge. Of course, they get too little, and less, in my judgment, than they would get if the focus of effort was somewhere else. I mean the aim is placed wrong. The proper aim of elementary tuition, I should say, is to organize the instincts and impulses of children into working interests and tools. The stress should be upon method, not upon result; not that we do not want results, but that we get better results, when we transfer the emphasis of attention to the problem of mental attitude and operation. We need to develop a certain active interest in truth and its allies, a certain disposition of inquiry together with command of the tools that make it effective; and to organize certain modes of activity in observation, construction, expression and reflection.

Six years ought to be enough to accomplish this task. And the limiting of the period to that time would, in my judgment, tend in the long run to make clear what is the real issue of elementary education. Such an outcome in the minds of the general public and of teachers



would free energy from devotion to false aims and irrelevant tasks. The elementary schools would be relieved of its two chief time-wasting factors: on one side, daily repetition of drill in rudiments which have been previously mastered; and, upon the other, anticipations of advanced subject-matter so difficult that it can be pursued intelligently only at a later period. The present elementary-school child spends too much time in oscillation between doing over again what has already been done, and reaching out in a blind way to do the things belonging to the future. He vibrates too much between marking time, and rushing forward, grasping and uncertain, to come abruptly and violently up against matters for which he has no adequate organs of apprehension. A reduction of time, and an accompanying definition of the real problem and function of the elementary school would have a tendency to remedy both of these evils. In other words, I am unable to find myself in agreement with the distinguished authority who said that the elementary school is all right except in its later years — the grammar-school period. The waste of time in these years appears to my mind only as one aspect of a larger question. The main object in laying hands upon the seventh and eighth grades is to encourage the movement for reconstruction all along the line.

2. *The secondary period.*—As to the fact that the high school has not enough time to do its own work properly, the case is so much clearer that I need not detain you with a detailed discussion. The high school at present has no definite task of its own, and no specific aim. It begins at no definite point and it ends at none. It stops, as President Harper has just told us, in the middle of a situation. It carries nothing to completion, but spends its energy in preparation for a work finished elsewhere. It makes beginnings, of the issue of which it has no vision, and over the consequences of which it has no supervision. Hence the waste that results from confusion and continual distraction of energy. A six-year period would enable the high school to face its own peculiar problem: That of opening to the mind avenues of approach to all the typical phases of nature and society, and acquiring a sympathetic knowledge of these areas of life—culture, in a word. Facing its own problem without distortion from outside pressure, it would have free space and leisure in which to work out that knowledge of the universe of nature and of humanity that is worth while; and that would enable its graduates to undertake later specialization in professional and research lines in an intelligent way—intelligent both as to consciousness of their own capacities, tastes, and

needs, and as to the knowledge of the relations of the particular province to which they are to devote themselves to the whole federated field of life. If I were to take enough of your time, I think I could show the bearings of this proposition upon the conflict in the high school of the scientific, social, historical and linguistic groups of studies. This conflict is now so serious that the average student is either compelled to narrow his sphere of study and thus to narrow himself; or, if he tries to broaden out, to lose himself in a footless marsh.

I am not specially optimistic as to the immediate outcome in this matter. I do not anticipate that a change of time-periods will make an immediate solution along the lines indicated. I have no doubt that the change would be at first of a somewhat mechanical nature. The eighth grade would be transferred to the high school without much re-qualification; some of the preceding work in the elementary grades would be cut off. At first, the high schools in their fifth and sixth years would largely duplicate the present work of the first and second years of college. But this would not last long. There would be a demand for a new adjustment and sequence of work—the broadening of the horizon would suggest new arrangements. The economics of the situation would gradually compel a more internal reorganization. Upon the whole, it is certain that the conditions under which work is done and the aims of that work must fit together.

If we change the conditions, there will be a general, even if largely unintentional, modification of purposes and consequently of the methods and materials employed. In the due course of time there will be a real system—a unity of aim with the distinction of functions best fitted to realize it in a continuous co-operative way.